

Representatives of Philadelphia
Libraries and Archives Discuss
Planned Observances of the Nation's
250th Birthday

Philobiblon Club
January 12, 2026

January 15, 2026 **Roundtable: 250th Anniversary of Thomas Paine's Common Sense**

Opening January 26, 2026: **Exhibition: Phil Parmet: Haitian Revolution**

January 27, 2026: **Emily Sneff, *The Messiness of Independence***

Opening February 9, 2026 **Exhibition: *Celebrate or Demonstrate: Philadelphia and Bicentennial Discontent***

Opening February 26, 2026 **Exhibition: *A Time to Right All Wrongs: France, Haiti, and Philadelphia in a Revolutionary Age***

March 27, 2026 **From the Kislak Stacks: Phil Parmet, *Photographing Revolution in Haiti***

April 9-11, 2026 **Conference: *The Revolutionary Age: France, Haiti, and America***

April 15, 2026 **"We are the Bicentennial": *Democracy and Diversity in the 1970s***

April 17, 2026 **Music in the Pavilion: *Lisette: A Song's Journey from Haiti & Back***

April 21, 2026 **WHYY 2026 Community Conversation: *Who are "We the People?"***

May 21 and 22, 2026 **Haitian Flag Day events**



Practice printing and papermaking
like they did in 1776.

Join us for year of programming exploring
the materiality of the Declaration of Independence
through printing, papermaking and typography.

THE TYPOGRAPHY OF INDEPENDENCE



COMMON PRESS

Fisher Fine Arts Library
University of Pennsylvania
220 South 34th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104



A DECLARATION BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED

W H E N in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Connection with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which Nature's God entitle them; a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the Causes which impel them to the Separation.

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and according to all Experience hath shewn, that Mankind is more disposed to suffer, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, which have assumed a Character of Consequence, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which compels them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great-Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and Oppressions, having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid Consideration.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public Good.
He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till he should assent thereto; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the Accommodation of the largest Part of his Subjects, except in Cases of Momentary Emergency.

He has called together Legislative Assemblies in the most distant and distant Parts of the Colonies, and dissolved them when they came together, except in Cases of Momentary Emergency.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

He has refused to assent to Laws for the Relief of the Debtors, who have petitioned for Relief, and have been confined in Prison, until they have paid the whole of their Debts.

Nursing the Revolution

- The **Barbara Bates Center for the Study of the History of Nursing** invites visitors to explore the overlooked yet essential role of nurses during the American Revolution, revealing how their labor helped shape early American healthcare. This exhibit challenges the widespread belief that nursing began with Florence Nightingale in the 19th century. Curated by Meg E. Roberts & Jessica Martucci.
- Exhibition: January 22-November 20, 2026
- Symposium: February 18, 2026: Nursing the Revolution: Care Work in Revolutionary America

The Town of Spruce
To Mary Harris
John Cadwell at
House 17 Days at
Spruce March 26th 1779



Pennsylvania Hospital

CELEBRATING OUR 275TH ANNIVERSARY DURING THE NATION'S 250TH



April through October
2026.

Special tours &
community events
planned.



Follow Penn Medicine
socials for more details.
Contact Curator-Lead
Archivist, Stacey C Peeples
with questions
[peepless@penmedicine.
upenn.edu](mailto:peepless@penmedicine.upenn.edu)



Join us as we transform the
Center Building of the
Historic Pine Building into
an exhibition space.



Experience
access
to eight
historic
rooms.



ADVENTIVE AMERICA

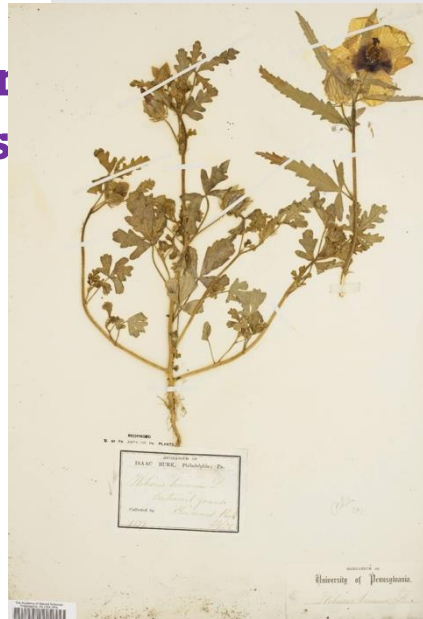
a symposium and exhibition
January 29–30, 2026



Tobacco (*Nicotiana*



Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*)



Hibiscus (*Hibiscus trionum*)



Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*)

Adventive America explores narratives of nation-building and the native through the critical lens of plant knowledge. We consider the botanical exchanges of the Bartrams with Indigenous peoples during the early republic; the role of plants at the 1876 Centennial Exposition and along the Delaware River's ballast grounds; and the ongoing agency



I
C
A
Institute of
Contemporary
University Art
of Pennsylvania

118 S. 36th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104
(215) 898-7108, icaphila.org

"Every force evolves a form"
Mother Ann Lee

THE SHAKERS

A WORLD IN THE MAKING

JAN 31–AUG 9, 2026

The Shakers: A World in the Making explores the design legacy of the Shakers, a religious group whose values of community, labor, and equality shaped their furniture, architecture, and everyday objects.

Founded in 18th-century England and later established in the U.S. across eighteen distinct communities, from Kentucky to Maine, Shaker communities developed a distinctive visual language—marked by simplicity, innovation, and purpose. While often celebrated for their aesthetic, Shaker designs were rooted in spiritual practice and collective life.

Through works by contemporary artists influenced by the Shakers, alongside original Shaker-made pieces, the exhibition considers how their design principles remain relevant today.

This exhibition was organized by the Vitra Design Museum, the Milwaukee Art Museum, the Institute of Contemporary Art Philadelphia, and the Wüstenrot Foundation in collaboration with the Shaker Museum.

Library Company of Philadelphia

The only known copy
of the first printing
of Benjamin
Franklin's
cartoon foreseeing
the separation of
Britain from her
colonies as a result of
the Stamp Act. After
Nov. 1, 1765

Preserved by Pierre
Eugene Du Simitiere,
whose huge
collection
of printed ephemera
was acquired by the
Library Company in
1785

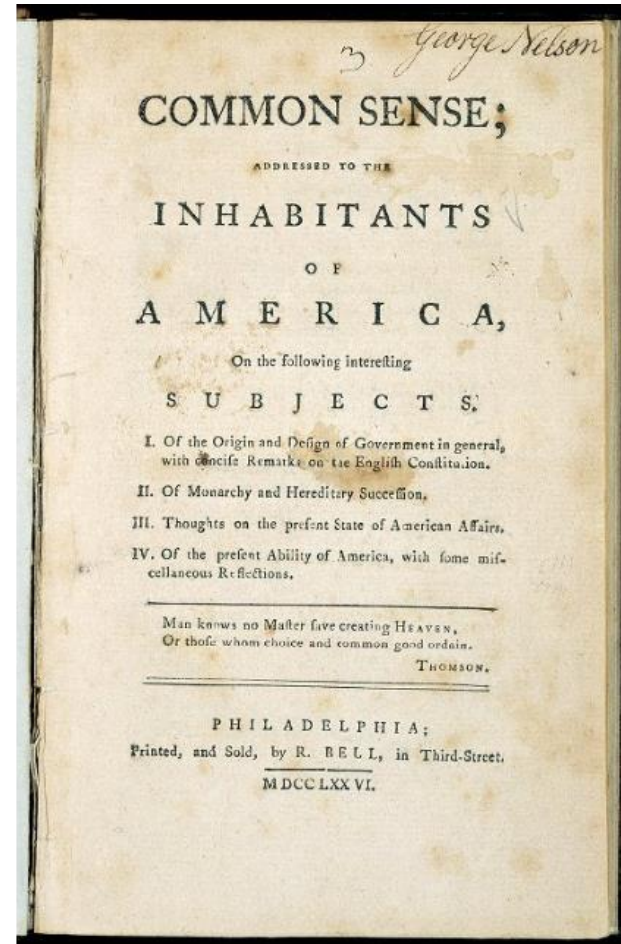
NORTH AMERICA

November the First MDCCCLV.

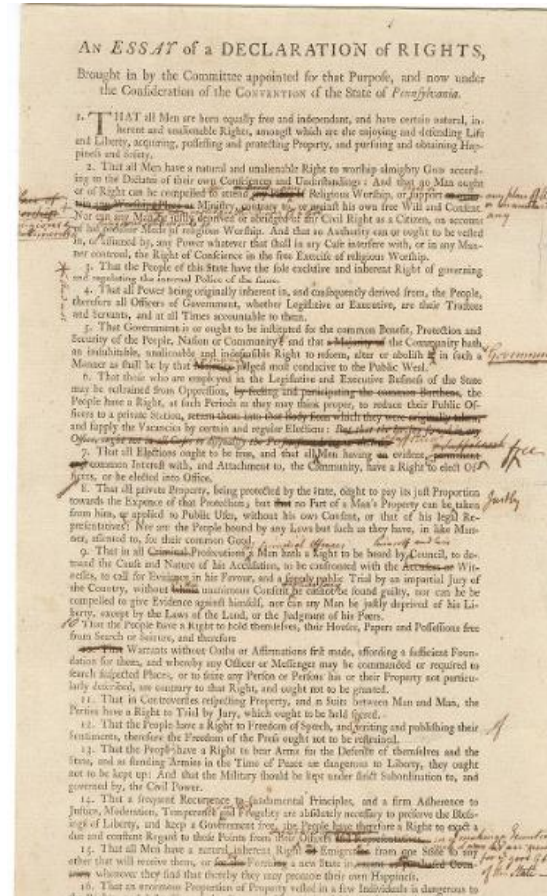


*The Original Print done in England on the back of a Message Card, the
Invention and for the use of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN ESQ; LL.D. Agent for
the Province of Pennsylvania, in London.*

Thomas Paine's
Common
Sense, the first
edition, first issue,
published
January 9, 1776



Benjamin Franklin's copy with his suggestions for improvement



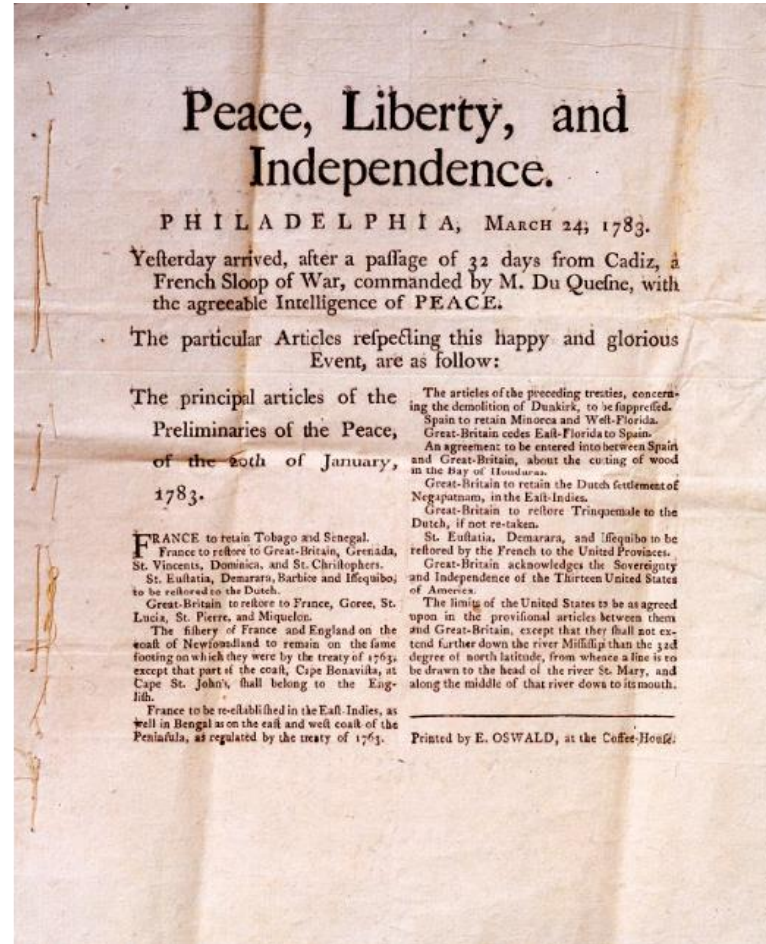
Sketch of a Meschianza
Costume
By John André, 1778

The Meschianza was an
extravagant fete orchestrated
by Major André for the British
officers on the eve of their
withdrawal from Philadelphia.



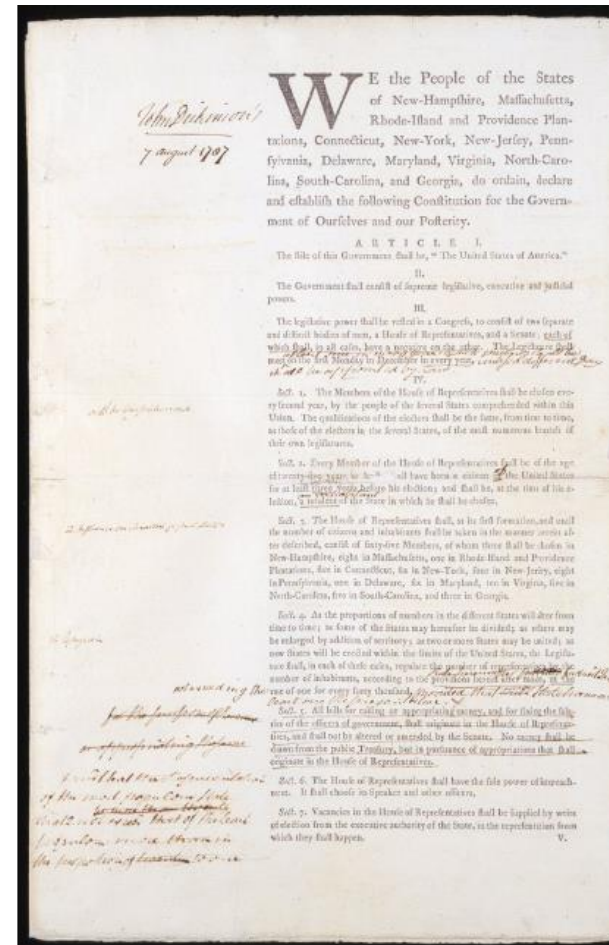
The first public
announcement
to reach America of the
terms
of the treaty ending the
Revolutionary war.

The only known copy



The first printed draft of the Constitution, 7 August 1787.

John Dickinson's copy
with his extensive
annotations



Silk banner carried by
the Philadelphia
tobacconists
in the Grand Federal
Procession celebrating the
Ratification of the U.S.
Constitution on July 4,
1788

Designed by Charles
Willson Peale

64 x 70 inches!



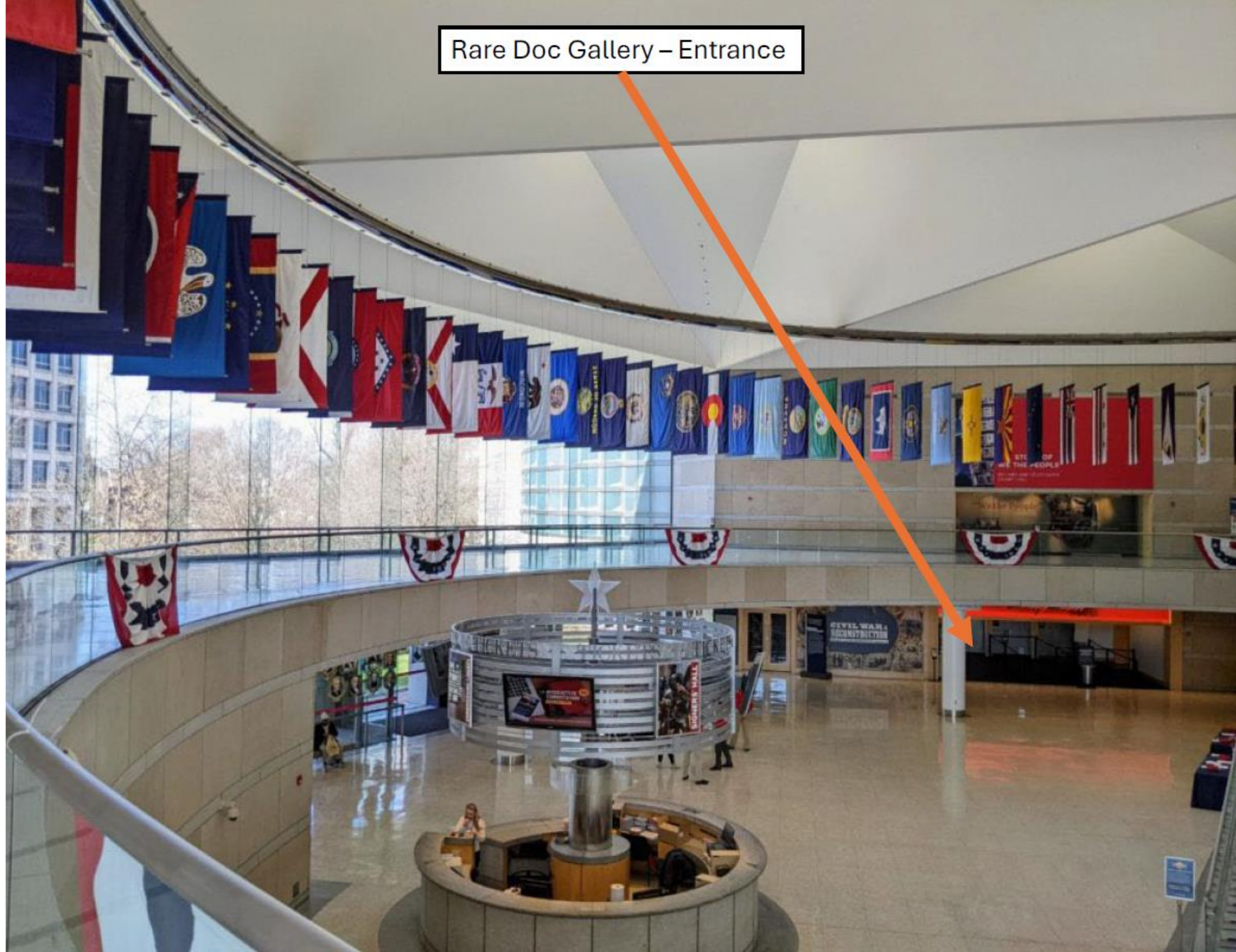
Penn's Project: How a City and Colony Shaped America's Civic DNA

September 30, 2026 (TBC)–January 3, 2027

National Constitution Center

(Rare Documents Gallery)

Rare Doc Gallery – Entrance



Introduction

William Penn had a bold goal when he founded Pennsylvania: **people of different religions and backgrounds could live together**. The colony in North America, Pennsylvania was built on this vision.

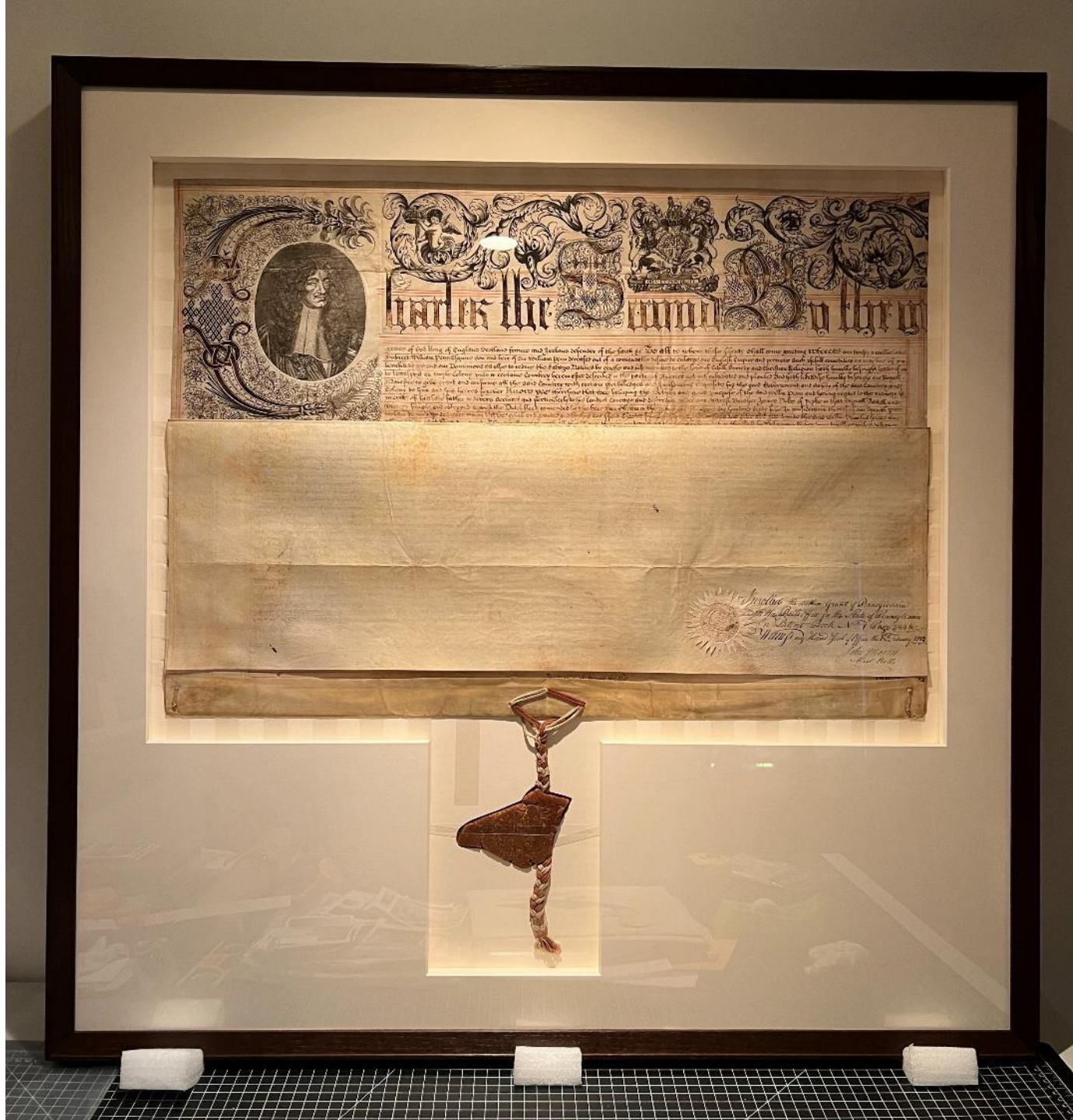
This exhibition traces the early history of Pennsylvania, its **founding documents** and earliest artifacts. It shows how the ideas of law and liberty, and religious toleration developed in new ways.

Explore Penn's vision, the ways it was realized, and how it was challenged—and sometimes compromised—by political, cultural, and economic pressures.

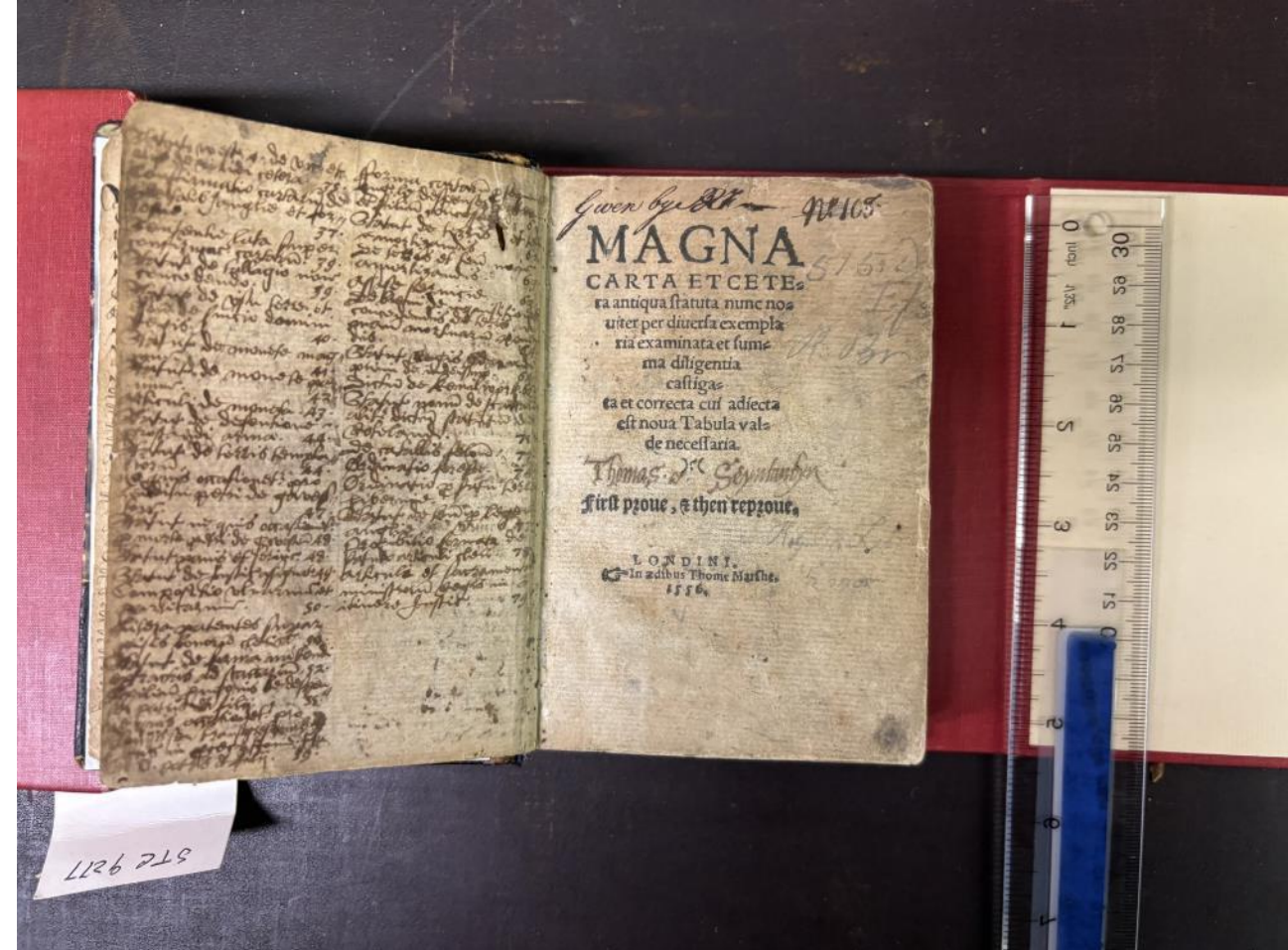


1: "A Holy Experiment"

PA Charter, 1681



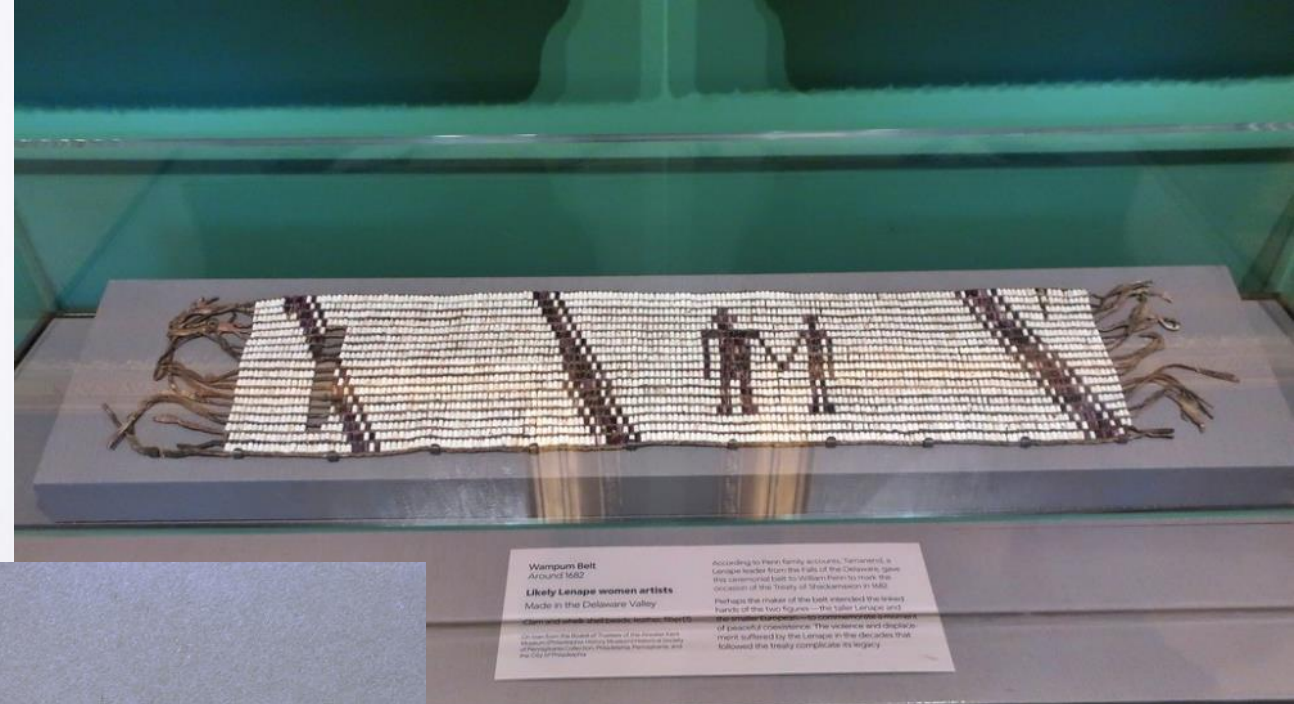
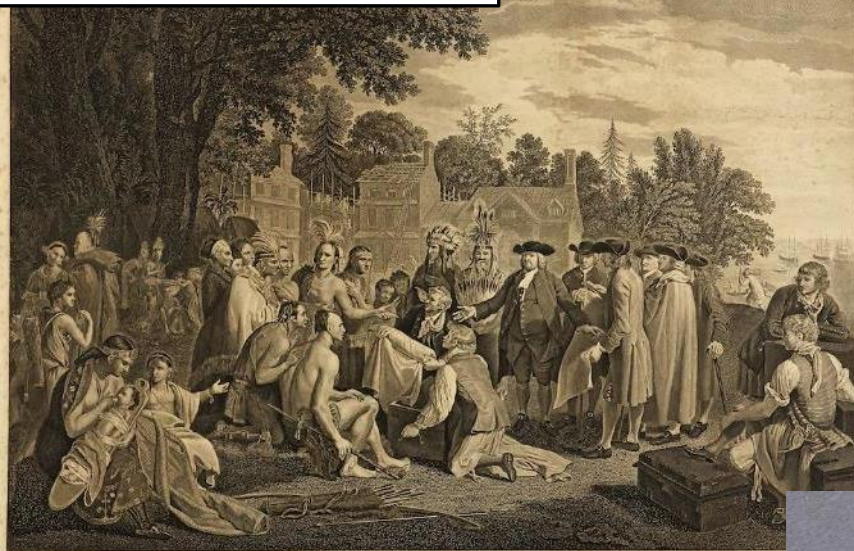
1.1: Quaker Roots and the Context of Dissent



Magna Carta, 1556 (early copy, owned by Ben Franklin)

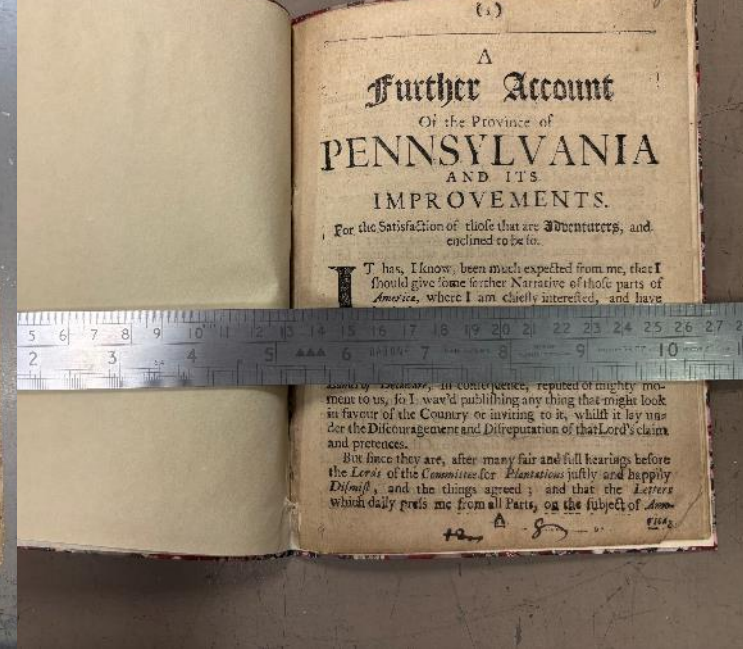
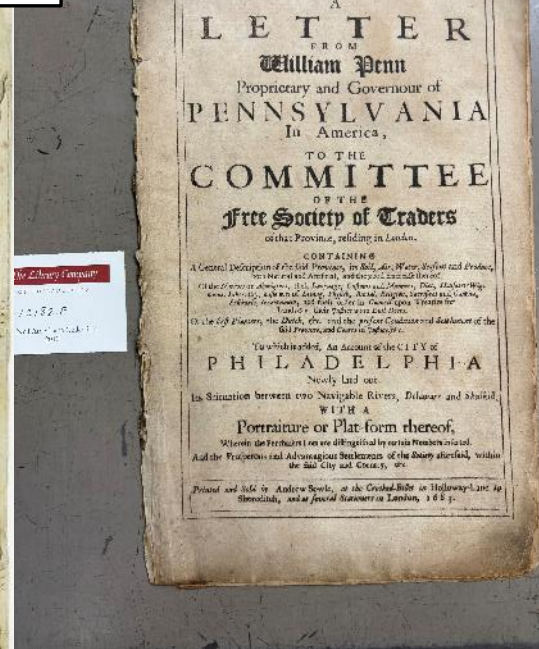
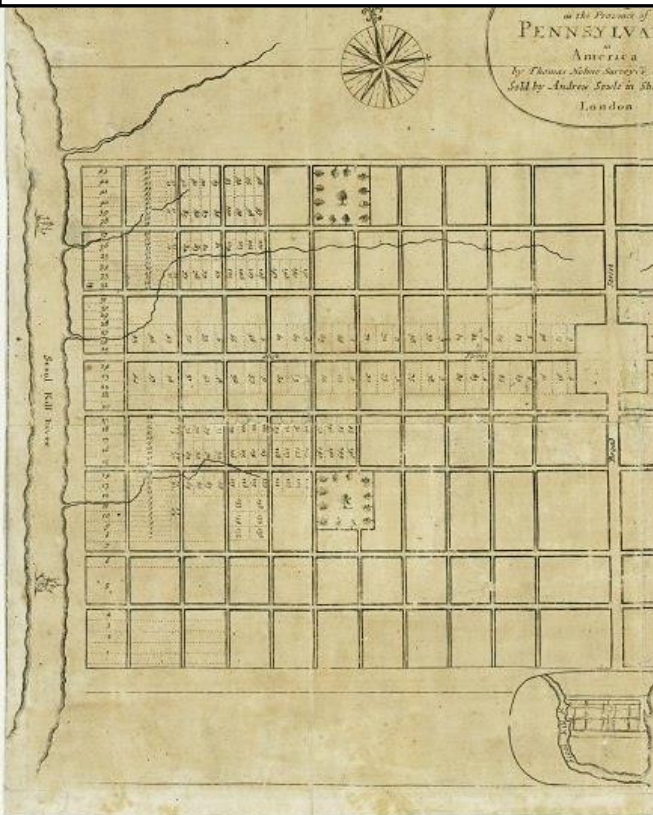
LEFT: Portrait of Penn, 1700s

1.2: A Vision for Law and Liberty



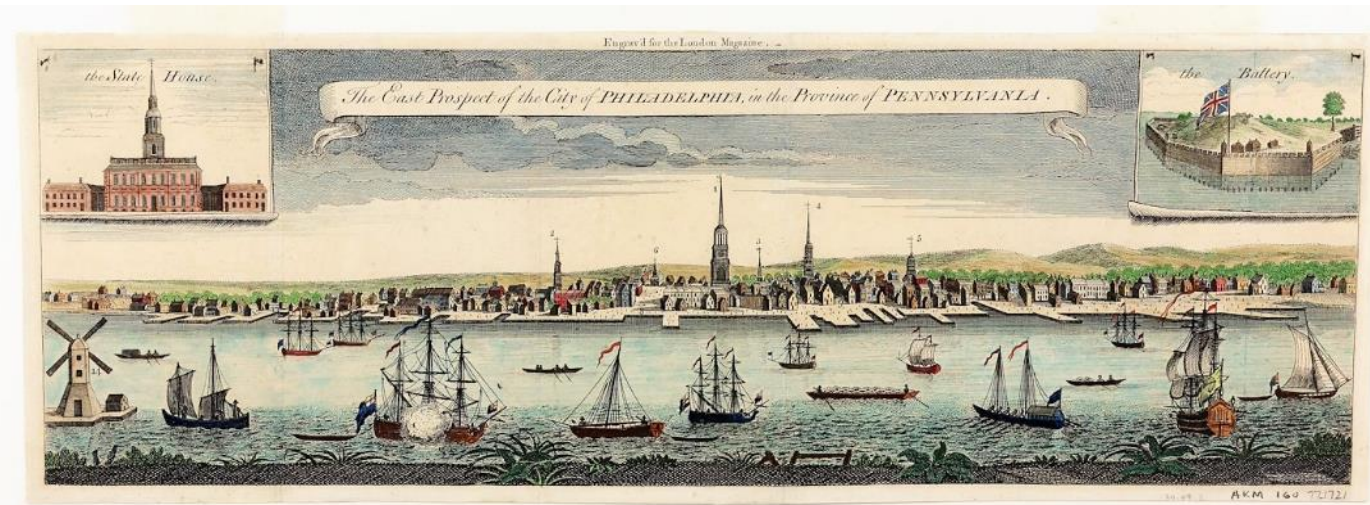
Wampum belt given to Penn (c. 1682); print of 1682 Treaty (1775); peace medals and gorget/neck plate, 1750s-70s

2/2.1: Selling an Ideal: Private Interest and the Commonwealth



1683 & '87 **Holme** maps; 1683 & '85 promotional pamphlets; 1688 deed from Penn, 1699 weathervane from Penn mill

2.2: Competing Interests and Fractured Control



1761 Heap view

LEFT: 1934 WPA map showing Lenape settlements/place names before European colonization

3.1: Slavery and Its Critics

Quaker
Protest
Against
Slavery,
1696

Friends, there was something before me concerning the buying
of Negroes. First the Scarcity of hands here, and difficult
they were to be had, I thought If I bought such of them as were good
It would be some help for me, and that I could with more
ease Load my calling to go to Meetings, And I have been
enquiring for some, & did send for one, In the mean while
the Consideration of it came before me, If I should have
a bad one of them, that must be corrected, Or would
be run away, Or when I went from home, & Leave him
with a Woman or Maid, and he should do for or look
to commit wickedness, If such a thing happened that it
would be more Loss and Troubles to me, than any out-
ward Gain could countervail, And I was in Perplexity
concerning it, And I could find no Satisfaction though I
Enquired of men (Some advised me to buy and others
to forbear) Then I desired of y^e Lord, that he would
make it known to me, whether it was his will y^t I should
buy of them or no, And I should do it howsoever it would
be as to worldly things, And it was not long before
he made it known unto me, That I should not be
concerned with them, And afterwards I had no freedom
to buy or take any of them upon any account, And being
I understand that there are divers y^t are not fully satisfied
concerning it, I could not but then make known how it was with
me upon this account, And I can say that I have nothing in
my heart against any particular y^t buy them, But I
would have them Consider this thing before the Lord to know
his will therein, And y^t worldly Gain should not have place
in the thing, But that we should remember Abraham
who at y^e Command of y^e Lord was ready to offer up his only
Son Isaac, who was a great Deal nearer to him than bond-
servants can be, It has been thus with me about two years
ago, at which time I had not heard of others writing abt
it, and If I could write my self, I had written it more at
large when it came to me

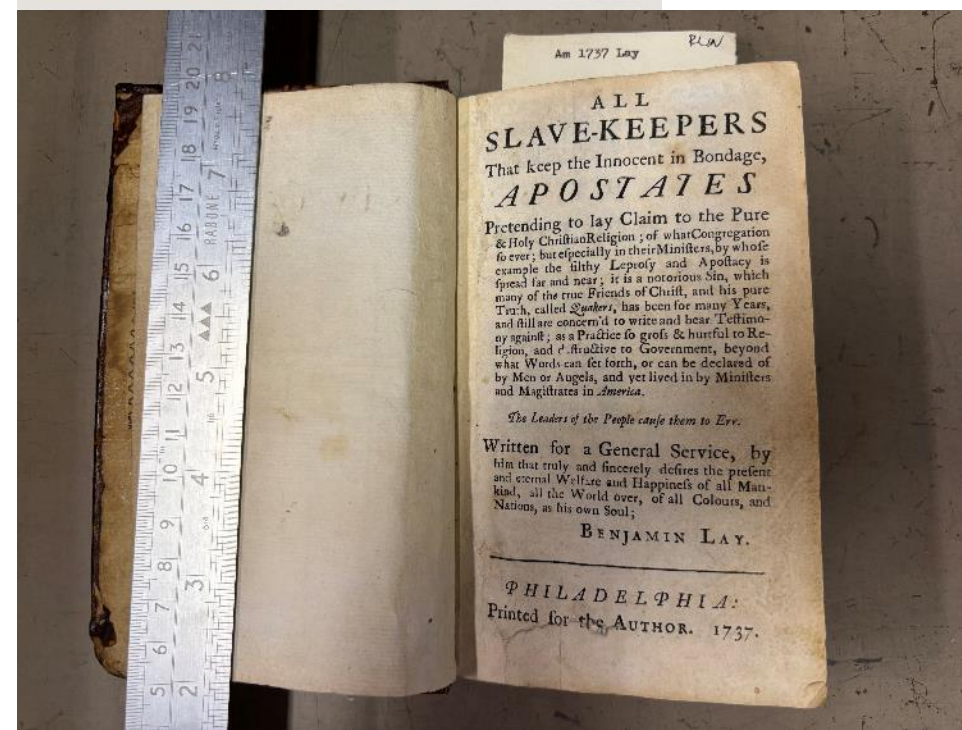
Mercion v. 29th of y^r
5th moneth 1696

Cadwalader Morgan



Portrait print of Benjamin
Lay, c. 1760

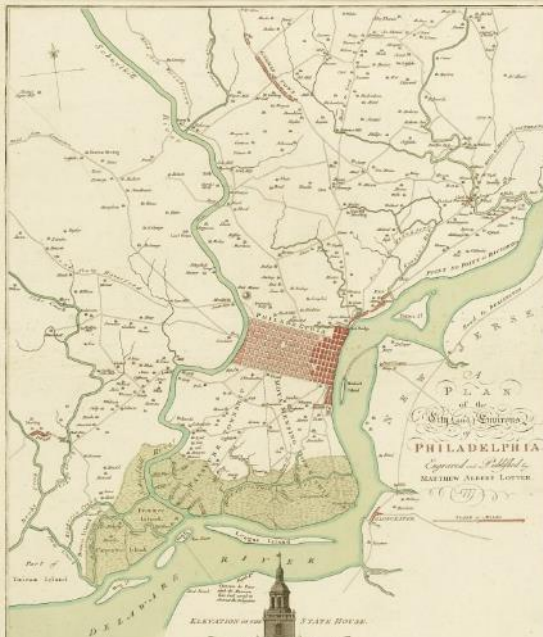
All Slave-Keepers...
antislavery tract published
by Lay, 1737 (printed by
Franklin)



3.2: Representative Government vs. the Proprietor

Charter of Privileges for PA, 1701

Charter of the City of Philadelphia, 1701



Portrait of Hannah Penn (c. 1742); PA Constitution (1776); plans of city (1769 & '77)

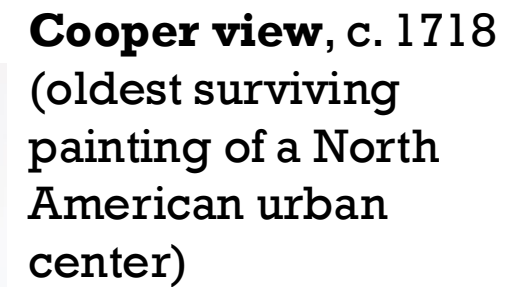
3.3: Growth and Expansion

Map documenting 1737

“Walking Purchase” (graphic)



[FINAL VIEW]



A detailed historical map of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, showing the city grid, the Delaware River, and the city's location relative to the state boundaries. The map includes a title block in the top right corner and a small inset map in the top left corner.

PHILADELPHIA
 the City of
PENNSYLVANIA
 showing the
 BARRIERS AND
 THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

DELAWARE RIVER

PART OF NEW JERSEY



Touchscreen Interactives

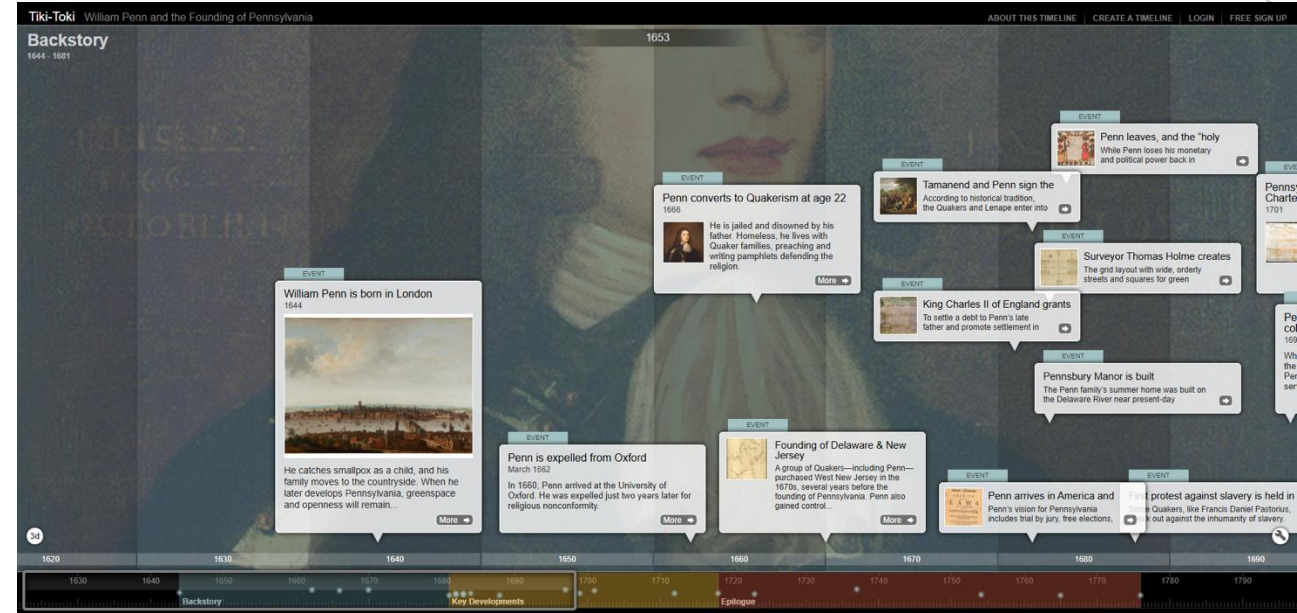
1. Timeline: William Penn and the Founding of Pennsylvania

- Key developments/exhibit connections

2. Pennsylvania Mapped

- Settlements before, during, and after Penn's time

[Drafts in progress]



Flash! Bang! Boom!

A History of Fireworks

The
Semiquincentennial at
the
Science History
Institute



From Kazimierz Siemienowicz, *Artis Magnae Artilleriae* (1650)

Flash! Bang! Boom!

The exhibition takes its starting point from a long-standing strength of the rare book collection: works on **gunpowder** and **fireworks**.

These follow from our original collecting area in the history of **chemistry** and **chemical industries**.*

*Note: Collection development in this area typically constrained to technical developments.

Science
History
Institute



Chemistry • Engineering • Life Sciences

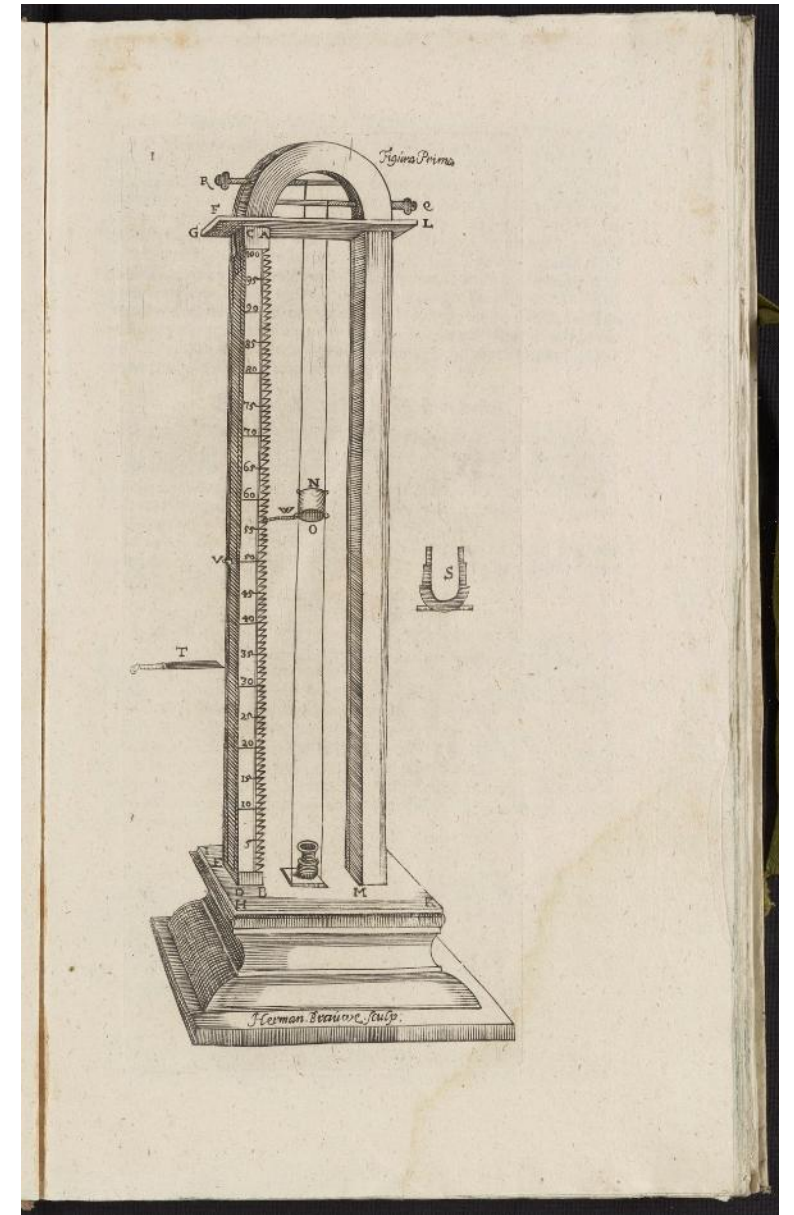
Collection Development for Flash! Bang! Boom!

General and Specific

Over the past 18 years I have added regularly to the fireworks books in our collection.

For instance, this book purchased at the New York Book Fair in 2012.

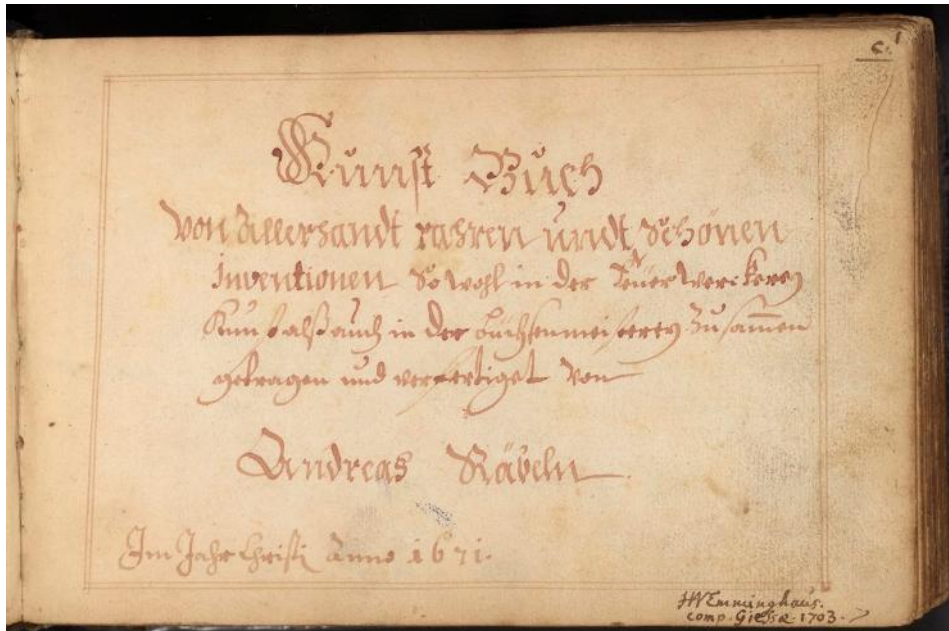
*From Vollenkommene Unterweisung,
Wie Raketen, Feuer- Wasser- Sturm-
Kugeln, Granaten, Pech-Sturm-Krüntze,
Und Allerhand Lust Und Ernsthafft
Feuer-Wercke Zubereiten (Osnabrück,
1660).*



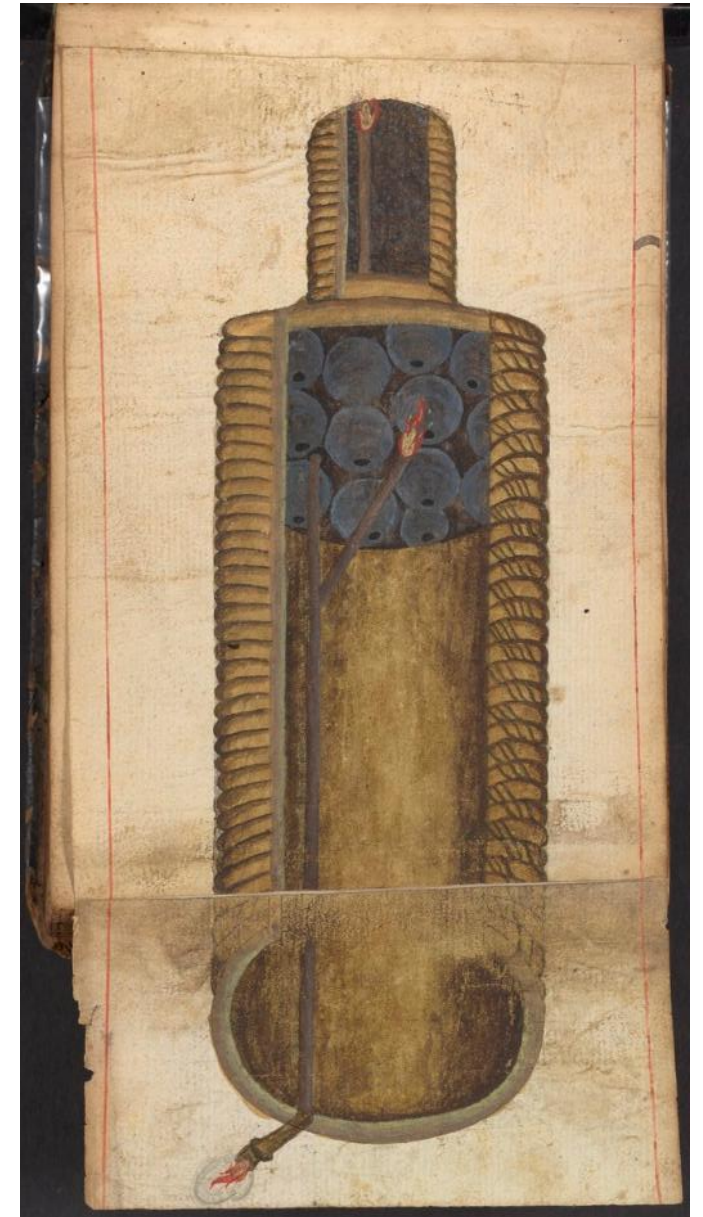
Collection Development for Flash! Bang! Boom!

General and Specific

But purchases have ramped up with planning for the exhibit, as this 17-century manuscript by Andreas Räbel.



Kunst Buch von allerhandt rahren undt schönen inventionen so wohl in der Feuerwerckerey Kunst als auch in der Büchsenmeisterey zusammen



Exhibition Development for Flash! Bang! Boom!

The library collection is merely the beginning of exhibition planning.

As plans move forward and a narrative is constructed, the exhibition team seeks out story lines and artifacts to flesh out the story. The current arc includes

“different approaches to regulation, safety, standardization, risk, testing, professionalization, and manufacturing.”

To tell these stories, our exhibit planners have infiltrated the fireworks community for their stories and to borrow artefacts.



Science
History
Institute



Chemistry • Engineering • Life Sciences

Flash! Bang! Boom!
Opens April 10, 2026

To register:

[https://www.sciencehistory.org/visit/events/
exhibition-opening-fireworks/](https://www.sciencehistory.org/visit/events/exhibition-opening-fireworks/)

Also, in collaboration with Welcome America, we are planning a fireworks display in east Fairmount Park in June.

Details to Follow

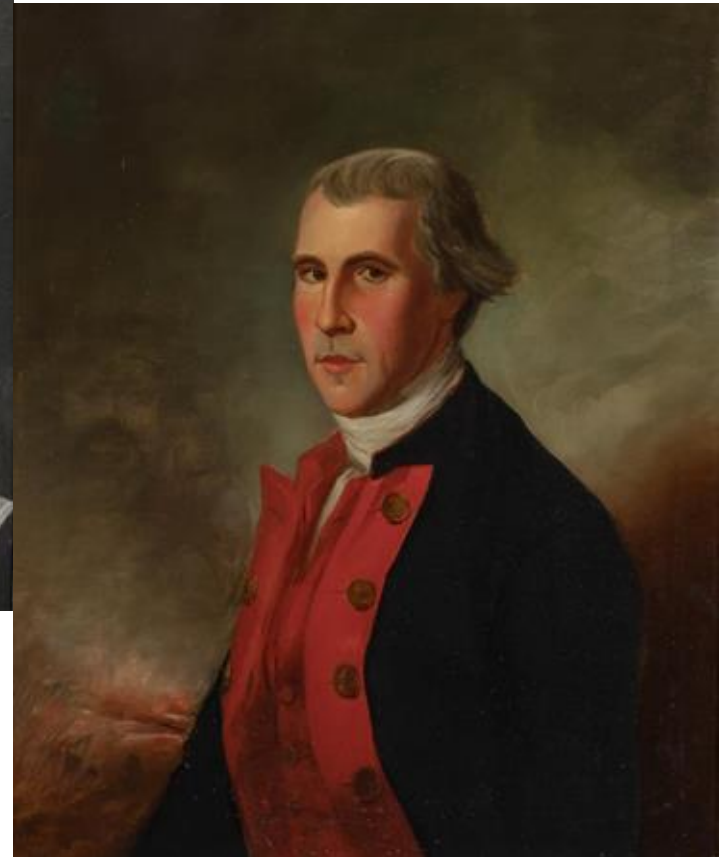
Andalusia Historic House, Gardens & Arboretum



Revolutionary Family: The Biddles & American Independence

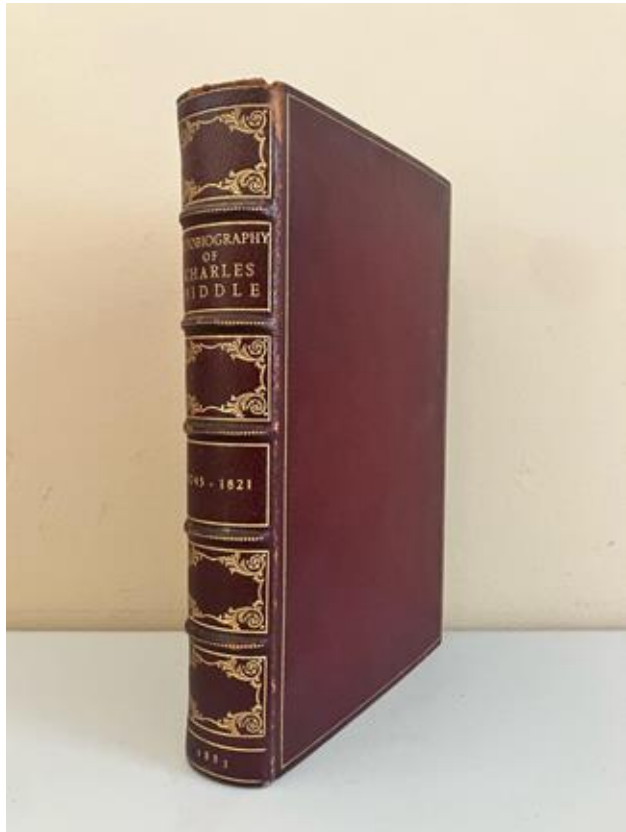
March 30 – November 13, 2026

- Clement Biddle, Commissary General of Forage for the Main Army
- Edward Biddle, delegate to the Continental Congress
- Mary Biddle, map editor and matriarch
- Captain Nicholas Biddle of the Continental Navy



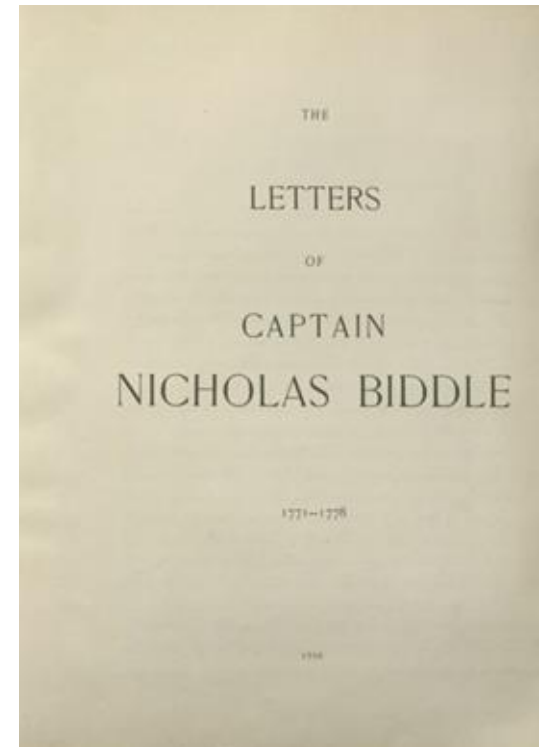
Revolutionary Family Highlights

*Autobiography of Charles Biddle,
vice-president of the Supreme
executive council of Pennsylvania
(1883)*



**Captain Nicholas
Biddle Letterbook**

THE
Revolutionary
CITY



Portraits of Clement & Rebekah Biddle

Kislak Center Center for Special Collections, Rare Books & Manuscripts University of Pennsylvania Libraries



The Garden

Landscape designer Arabella Lennox-Boyd has created new elements for the Walled Garden, including ornamental topiaries and 12-foot-tall rose pillars, to be unveiled next spring.



The Clay Studio

Radical Americana: Sophie Glenn & Jody Graff

“Radical Americana” is a city wide series of exhibitions marking the Semiquincentennial of the United States of America. The exhibitions are party of Art Philly and Philly 250.

A partnership with The Clay Studio will present new works by two talented artists who draw inspiration from the historic house and gardens.



Moonstruck

Sophie Glenn

Researching at the Wharton Esherick Museum,
Exhibiting at Andalusia Historic House, Gardens &
Arboretum



Bartram's Garden Nine Patch Seven Brothers
Quilt,

Jody Graff

Researching at the Historical Society of
Pennsylvania, Exhibiting at Andalusia Historic
House, Gardens & Arboretum

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Caitlin goodman
Swarthmore college



Broadly scoped to six themes

- What Makes a Family
- Our Land
- Fabric of the Nation
- Satire
- Serving/Service
- Who Counts?

Back cover of *Negroes and the War*,
United States Office of War Information, 1942



Particularly the late Deliverance of the British Kingdoms.

Fidelity and Loyalty to our King to be manifested.

And Prayers for him.
* 1. Tim. ii. 1. 2.
And for the Reconciliation of the World unto God.

consider the signal Occasion we now have, with the utmost Thankfulness and Humility to acknowledge the gracious Interposition of the divine Providence in the Deliverance vouchsafed to our KING and to our Fellow-Subjects in *Great-Britain*, from the Difficulties and Dangers to which many have been exposed, by the base, wicked and perfidious Attempts of unreasonable and ungrateful Men, who had combin'd against our Happiness and were desperately engaged in attempting the Subversion of our Liberties, in order to subject us to the Tyranny of a *Popish Pretender*, and to the Superstition and Idolatry of the Church of *Rome*: And we do fervently desire that all, who profess Fellowship with Us, may be zealously concerned, by the whole Course of their Conduct, to give the most convincing Testimonies of Fidelity and Loyalty to our KING, who on this Occasion hath manifested a particular Safety and Protection of all his faithful Subjects, and whose favour continuing to us the free Enjoyment of our Religious and Civil Liberties, we do with abundant Caute humbly and dutifully to Acknowledge. “ And (as a frequent Practice) when favour'd in our Approaches to the Throne, by our Supplications, Prayer, and giving of Thanks for the KING, and under HIM, * and to beseech the Almighty that he would direct his Judgments in the Earth by *reconciling the World unto himself thro' JESUS CHRIST*, that the general Reception of the Gospel by all Men, may enable them to praise the Name of the Lord, say *the highest, on Earth Peace, and Good Will to Men*, Luke ii. 14.

AND as it hath pleas'd the Lord by the breaking forth of the C

(roughly)
1776-2006



Above: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting epistle
proscribing “Loyalty to our KING” (1746)
Right: Lauren Emeritz’s *America* (2025)



Top row:

[work for peace flag]

The New Christian Right, 1983

Win the Next War Now, 1918

Middle row:

[that's a placeholder – it will be two things: a Liberty Loan pin and flag-wrapped coffin]

Healthy... Why? Circa 1920s

America is Hard to Find, 1970

Bottom row:

Pennsylvania's Black History, 1975

Help Unsell the War, 1972

State of the Union, 2012





From left to right:

Friends' Committee for Reconciliation and Church Reconstruction (Mississippi Project) fundraising materials, 1965

Father John Dear's ID card from World Trade Center Recovery Ceremony, 2002

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Twin Sombreros, You and Your Future Job (Armed Services Editions, 1940s)

Nisei in Uniform [Department of the Interior War Relocation Authority], 1943

Ernest Wolfe chest x-ray from Civilian Public Service human guinea pig experiment, 1942





OCCUPY EVERYTHING



Clockwise from top left:
 “Unfolding the Quilt”
 scrapbook (1987); Seneca
 Nation public notice
 (1844); Occupy
 Everything (2012)

INDIAN LANDS.

WHEREAS,

T. L. OGDEN and JOSEPH FELLOWS, in behalf of the Ogden Company, have given notice that they will, on the 26th day of June, instant, sell at Public Auction, parts of the Buffalo Creek Reservation, now owned and occupied by the Seneca Nation, promising the purchasers indisputable title and immediate possession.

Now, Therefore,

We the undersigned Chiefs of said Nation, and acting in its behalf, do hereby declare our opinion that the title of the Ogden Company to the lands they offer for sale is far from being indisputable, and our fixed determination to assert the title of our nation to the said Reservation and every part thereof. We will not yield possession of any portion of said Reservation to the Ogden Company, or any one claiming under it, unless the law shall decide in their favor. We are confident in the justness of our cause—we have been defrauded and oppressed—we will not be trodden down and destroyed without resistance, but we appeal to the American People, and the Laws of the Land.

Dated, at the Council House, on the Buffalo Creek Reservation, this 4th day of June, 1844.

John X Green Blanket,
 John X Bennett,
 Peter X Johnson,
 Peter White,
 John Hudson,
 George X Kinjckerty,
 John X Baldwin,
 John X General,

John X Luke,
 John X Long Finger,
 John Jacket,

Warriors,

Peter X Snow,

John X Joshua,
 Joseph Silverheels,
 Sky X Carrier,
 John X Tall Chief,
 Henry Two Guns,
 Jacob X Bennett,
 John X Barks,
 Adam X Doxtator,

John M. Mason,
 George Washington,
 Andrew Snow,





Werner Pfeiffer, *State of the Union* (2012)

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES 1776-2026 will be on view at McCabe Library

April 28 through September 3, 2026

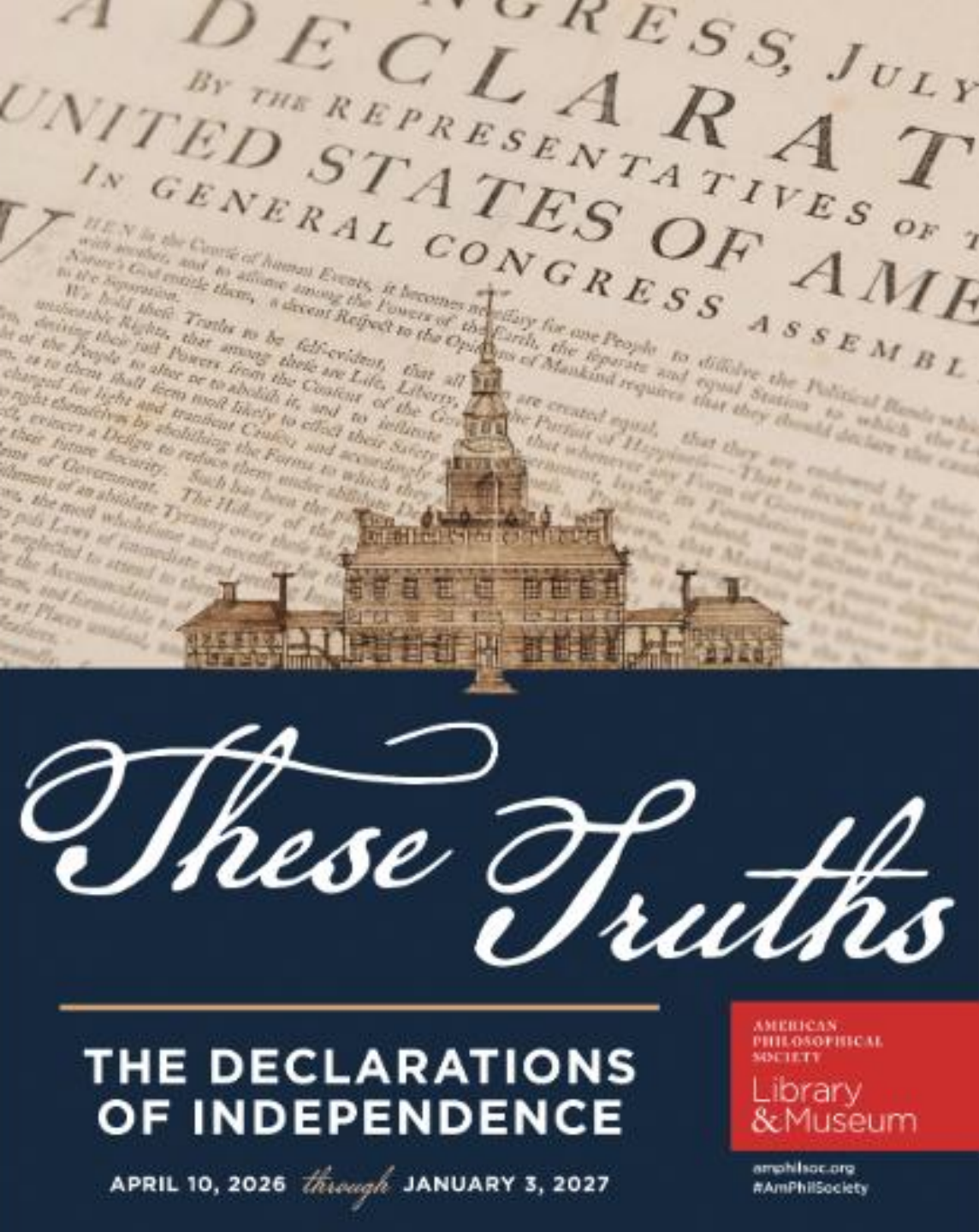


American Philosophical Society

January 13, 2026

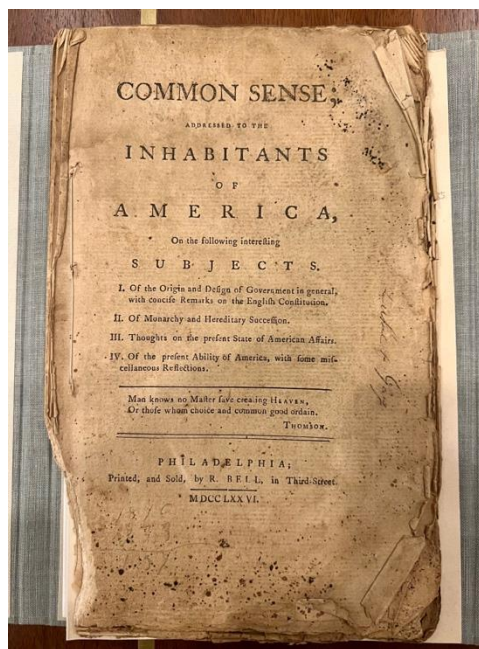
250th Initiatives:

*These Truths:
The Declarations of Independence*



G O D S A V E T H E K I N G.

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with inherent and inalienable rights; that among these ^{certain un} ^{alienable rights} are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, government

[illegible]

Revolutionary City Portal:

Launched on **July 1, 2025**, the portal is nearly 5 years in the making and designed as a one-stop-archival-shop for materials about Philadelphia during the American Revolution. It currently includes:

More than 6,500 documents drawn from materials held by 10 partners (many of them here tonight!) These documents represent 49,000 pages from 101 collections.

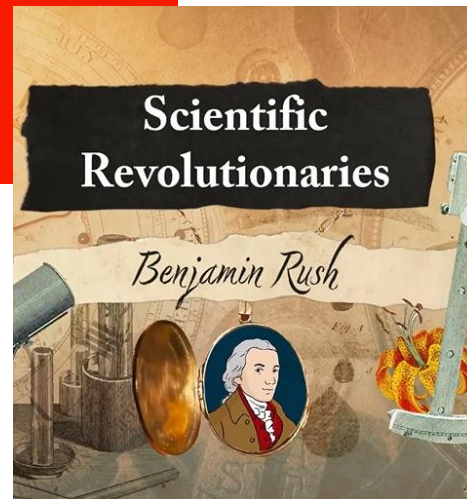
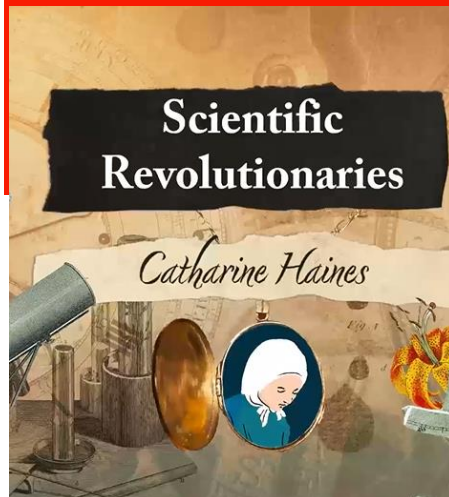
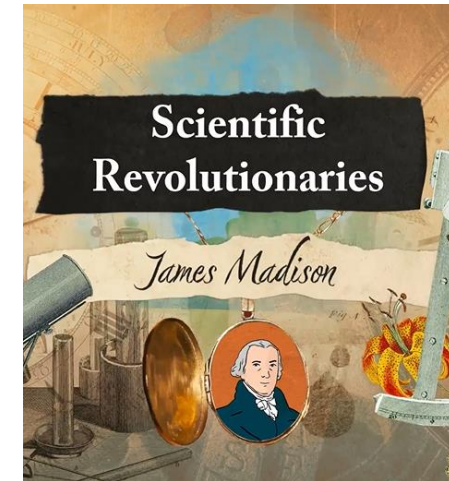
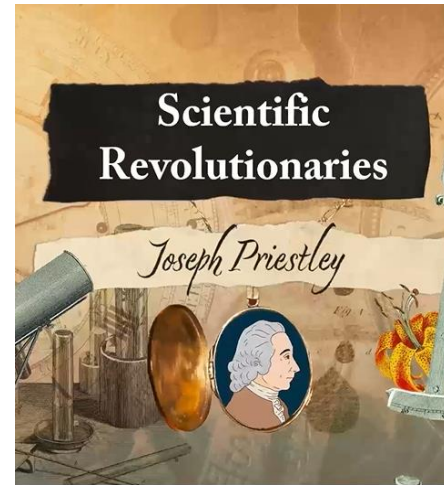
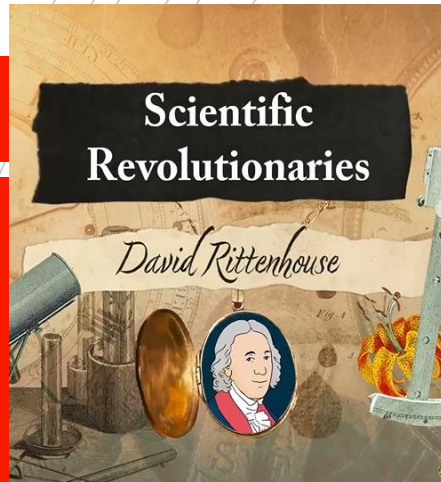
10% of these portal holdings have been translated using AI.

The portal receives more than 3,500 visitors a month.

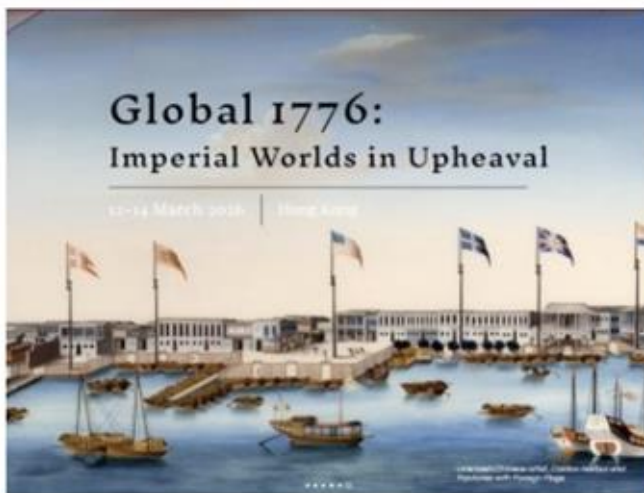
Supported by two grants: \$100K from the Philadelphia Funders Collaborative and \$500K from NEH.



America's Scientific Revolutionaries:



2026 Conferences:



Call for Papers: "Global 1776: Imperial Worlds in Upheaval," Hong Kong, March 12-14, 2026



Call for Papers: "America's 1776: Independence and its Enduring Legacies," June 4-6, 2026



Call for Papers: "Europe's American Revolution," Paris, Oct. 2026

NEH Landmarks K-12 Teacher Workshops:

July 20-24, 2026

August 3-7, 2026

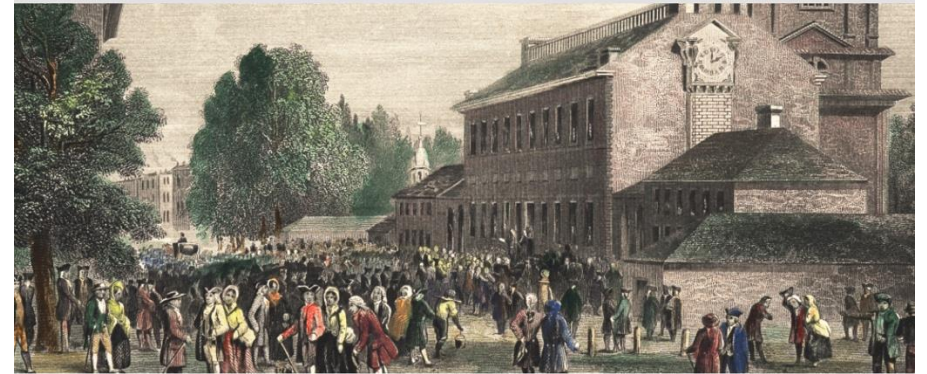
Supported by a \$190,000 NEH Landmarks grant, this program will bring 35 K-12 teachers to the APS in the summer of 2026.



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

American Philosophical Society

AMERICAN
PHILOSOPHICAL
SOCIETY



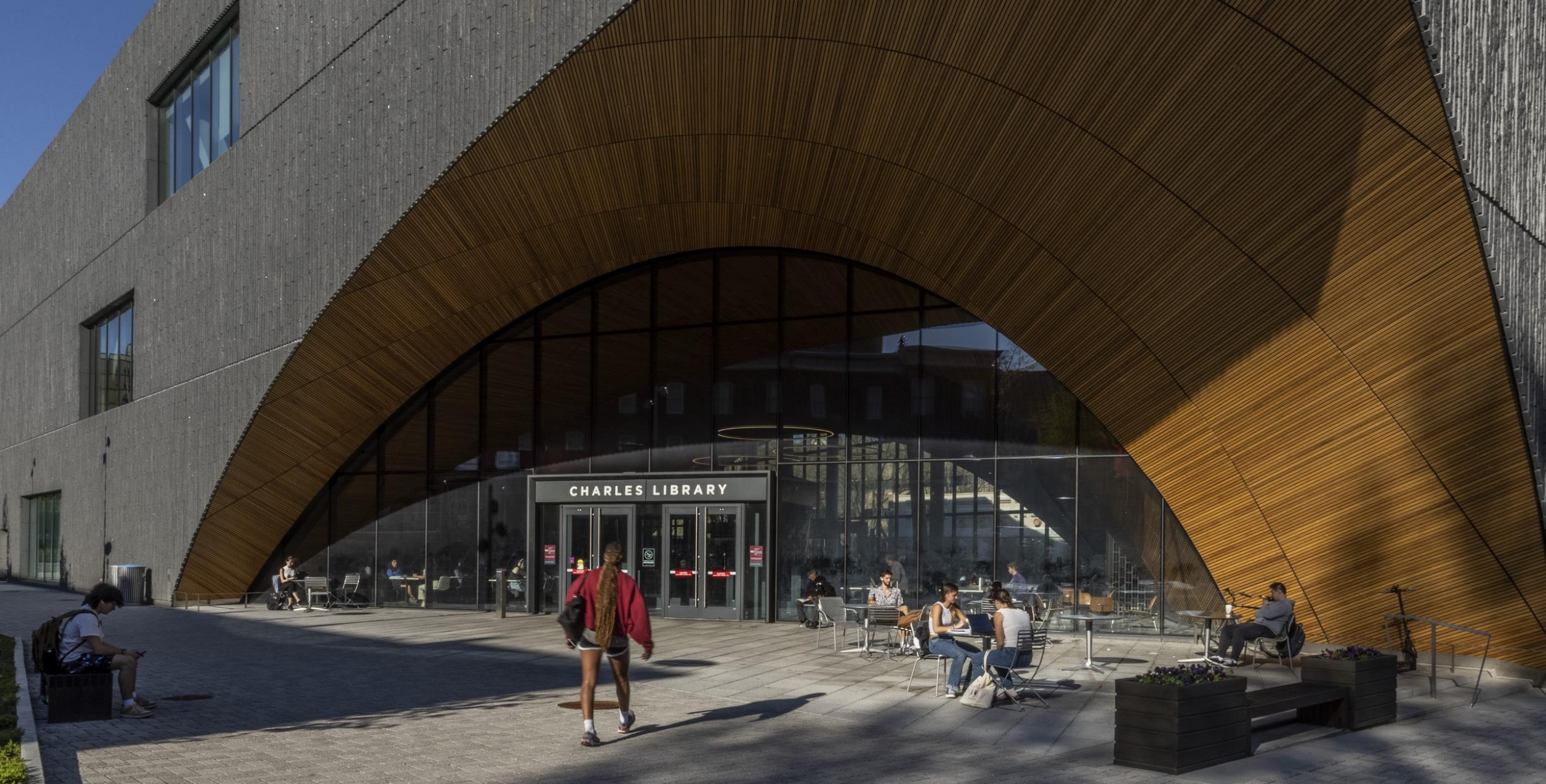
America's Forgotten Founders: The Revolutionary City of Philadelphia

This National Endowment for the Humanities Landmarks for History and Culture for K-12 Educators Workshop will bring 5th to 12th grade teachers to the city where it all began, Philadelphia, and reconsider what constitutes a “founding” document and who counts as “founder.”



Special Collections Research Center

| Kimberly Tully & Melissa Minds VandeBurgt





Colette Fu

Noodle Mountain





Programming

- **Exhibit Opening and Reception**
- **Artist's Talk/Workshop**
- **Community Member Panel Discussion**



John W. Mosley (1907–
1969) Elks Parade,
Philadelphia, ca. 1944

Reflections in Black: A Reframing

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 - Wednesday, April 15, 2026

Presented by the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, *Reflections in Black: A Reframing* is a group photography exhibition curated by Dr. Deborah Willis. The exhibition accompanies the release of the 25th-anniversary edition of Dr. Willis' internationally acclaimed publication *Reflections in Black: A History of Black Photographers 1840 to the Present*—the first comprehensive history of Black photographers.

Featuring modern prints, this exhibition extends Dr. Willis's pioneering effort to reshape the narrative of American history by centering the aesthetic, political, and cultural contributions of Black photographers from the 19th century to the present.

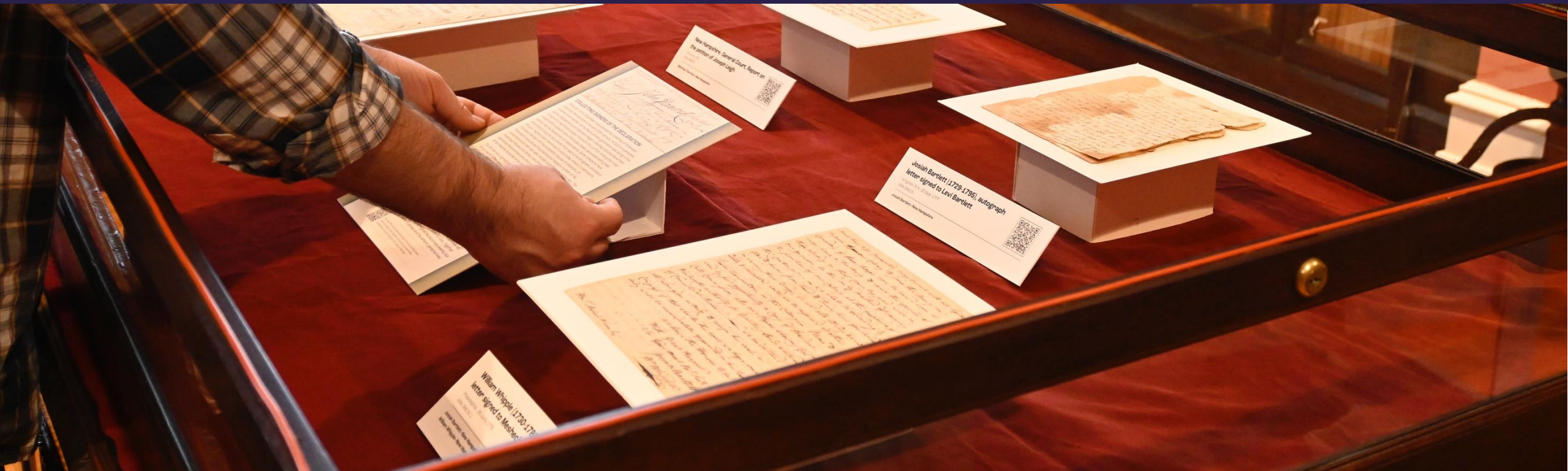
Opening Reception & Book Signing

Join us for the exhibition opening reception on Tuesday, January 20, from 5:30–7:30 p.m. in the Charles Library Event Space. Light refreshments will be served.



THE ROSENBACH

MUSEUM & LIBRARY





Monthly rotating exhibition
Signers of the Declaration

John Hancock
John Adams
Thomas Jefferson

John Jay
James Madison

John Rutledge
Edmund Randolph

George Washington
James Wilson

John F. Kennedy
Lyndon B. Johnson
Richard M. Nixon

I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence.

New Hampshire, General Court, Report on the petition of Joseph Leigh



March 1776
New Hampshire

I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence.

Josiah Bartlett (1729-1796), autograph letter signed to Levi Bartlett



March 1776
New Hampshire

I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence.

United States, Continental Congress, Committee of Secret Correspondence, Charter of the brigantine Cornelia



1 February 1776
New Hampshire

Josiah Bartlett, New Hampshire
Benjamin Franklin, Pennsylvania
Joseph Hewes, North Carolina
Thomas Mifflin, Delaware
Robert Morris, Pennsylvania

I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence.

COLLECTING SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION

When Dr. A. W. Henshaw popularized the collecting of American historical documents in the early 20th century, he felt an agonizing need to find more. As the Revolutionary generation was dying in the 18th century, and historians began collecting documents written or signed by significant people involved in the conflict. Among the most sought after subjects were individuals closely associated with great events, like the Declaration of Independence. Some collectors have attempted to acquire documents from each of the 56 signers, and about 40 such "signers" have been known to exist today, mostly in collections. However, many of the documents are in the hands of private collectors, and the documents are often in the hands of private collectors, and the documents are often in the hands of private collectors.

The 56 men who signed the Declaration were representatives of the 13 British North American colonies involved in the French and Indian War. The purpose of the Continental Congress was to coordinate resistance to British Parliament's increased attempts to impose taxes and other legislation on the American colonies. In order to raise the debt incurred during the Seven Years War (1754-1763), Britain imposed taxes on the French and Indian War. As resistance met armed repression and desperate measures, the American colonies had a momentous choice: continue to appeal to the overseas government or declare themselves independent. The Second Continental Congress voted for independence on July 2, 1776, and two days later approved a declaration explaining their decision. Individual signers were only asked to sign a formal manuscript copy on parchment beginning on August 2. Some who signed had been asked for the prior vote but added their names to register their commitment to the cause.

In this 250th anniversary year, the Roundabout Institute has been able to host a changing selection of significant documents, state by state. Together these documents offer glimpses not only of great Revolutionary events, but also of routine public and private business and the ordinary personal lives.

This copy has been made from the original of the document presented to the Roundabout Institute. It is a copy of the original document, and is not a reproduction of the original document.

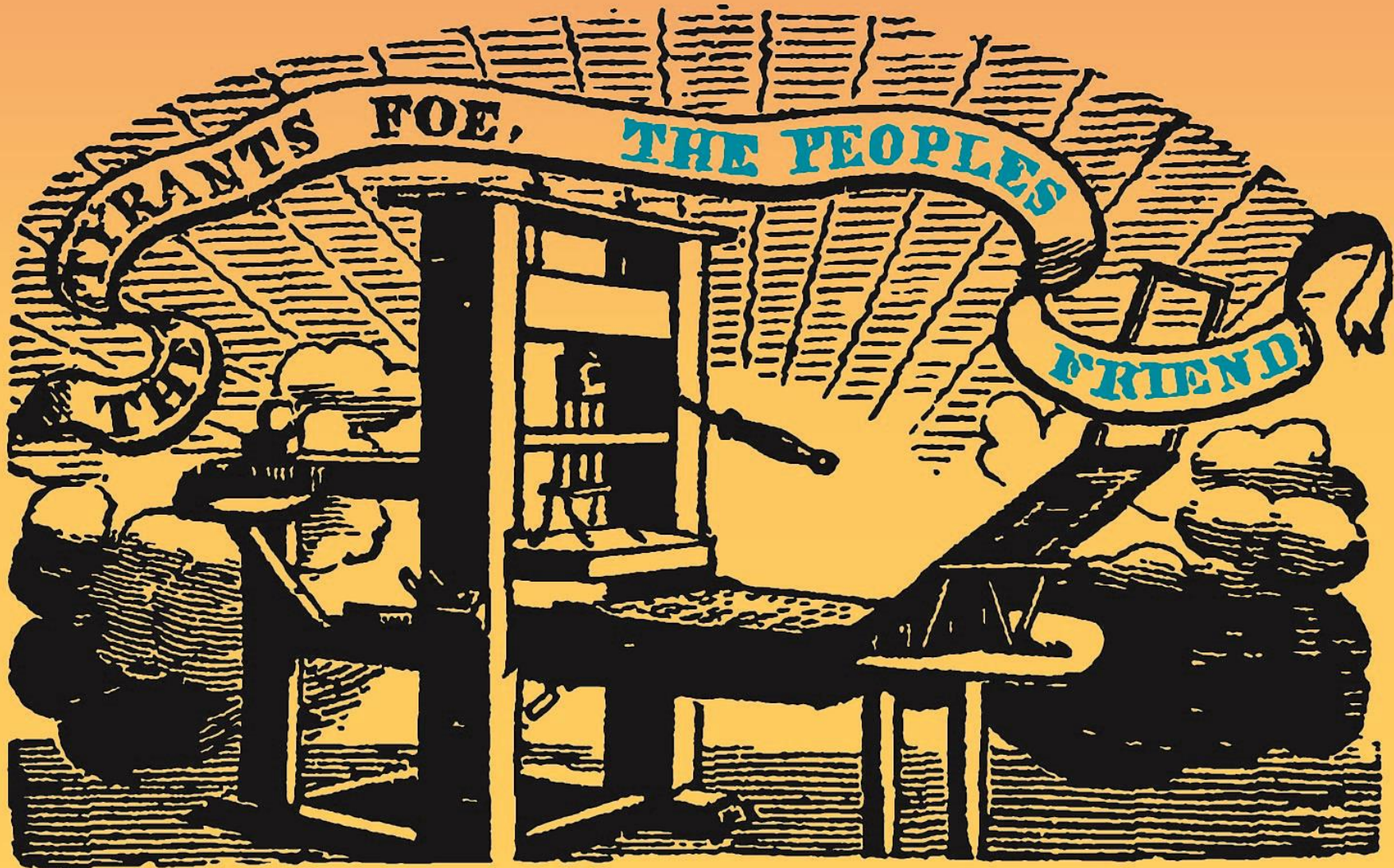
I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence. I am the only person who has the honor of being the first to sign the Declaration of Independence.

William Whipple (1730-1785), autograph letter signed to Meshech Weare



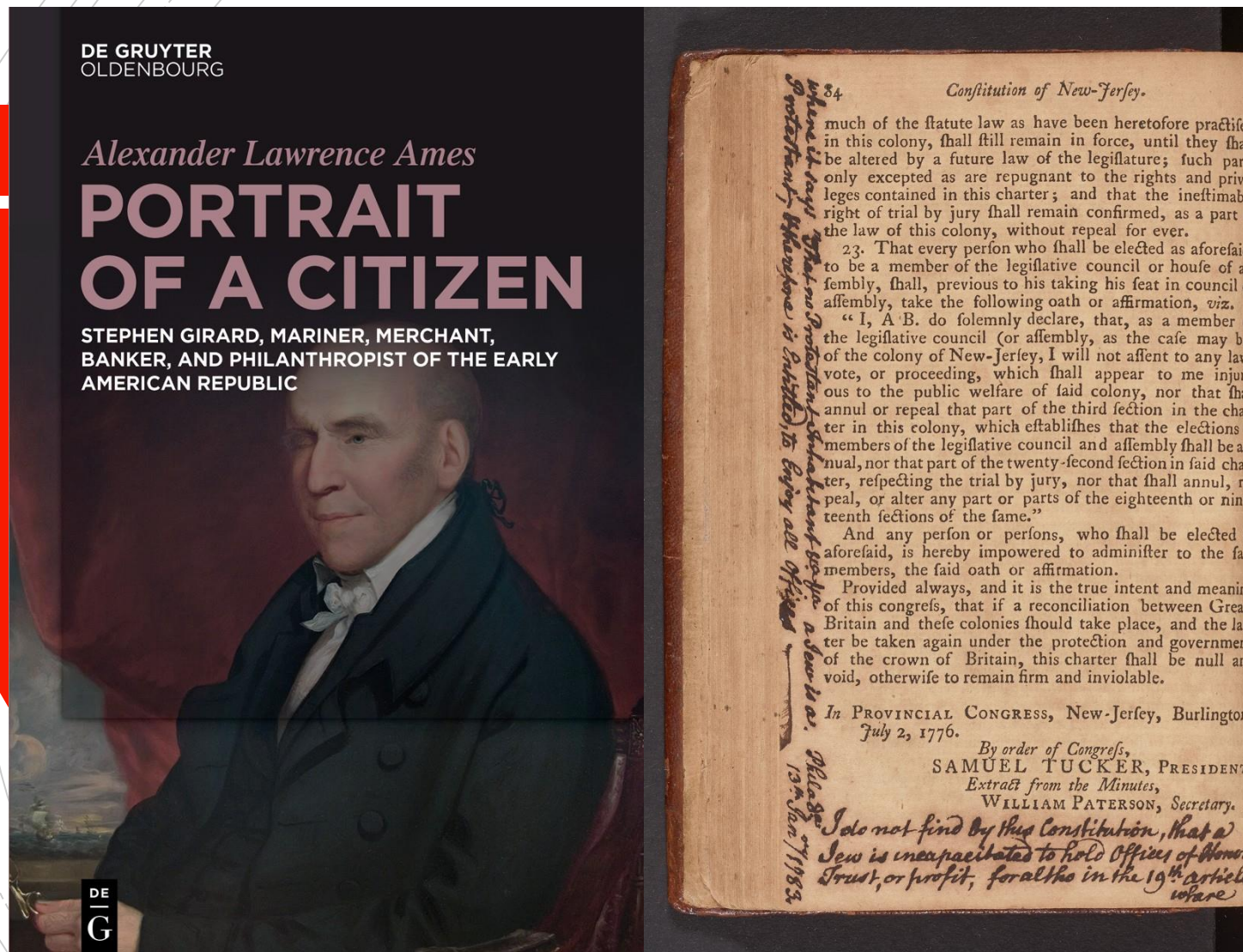
Philadelphia, 28 June 1776
New Hampshire

Josiah Bartlett, New Hampshire
William Whipple, New Hampshire



CIVIC DIALOGUES *at the* ROSENBACH

Portrait of a Citizen: 250 Years of
Stephen Girard in Philadelphia
with Alexander Ames
In Person | Saturday, June 6



Jewish Liberty and the American
Revolution with Paul Finkelman

In Person | Sunday, April 19



Revolutionary Pamphlets to Zines

In Person | Sunday February 22

Printing America's Founding Documents

Coming Soon!

Intro to Letterpress: Printing Phillis Wheatley

Coming Soon!

Find

Explore

Ask

Philly 250

Home > Programs & Services > Philly 250



Philly 250 at the Free Library

Let's write the next chapter.

As the nation marks the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the Free Library invites all of Philadelphia to explore creative events, exhibits, and civic dialogues that reflect on our shared history to imagine a better future together.

On This Day in Philly History

January 12

1860 Catholic priest and the second president of Saint Joseph's University...

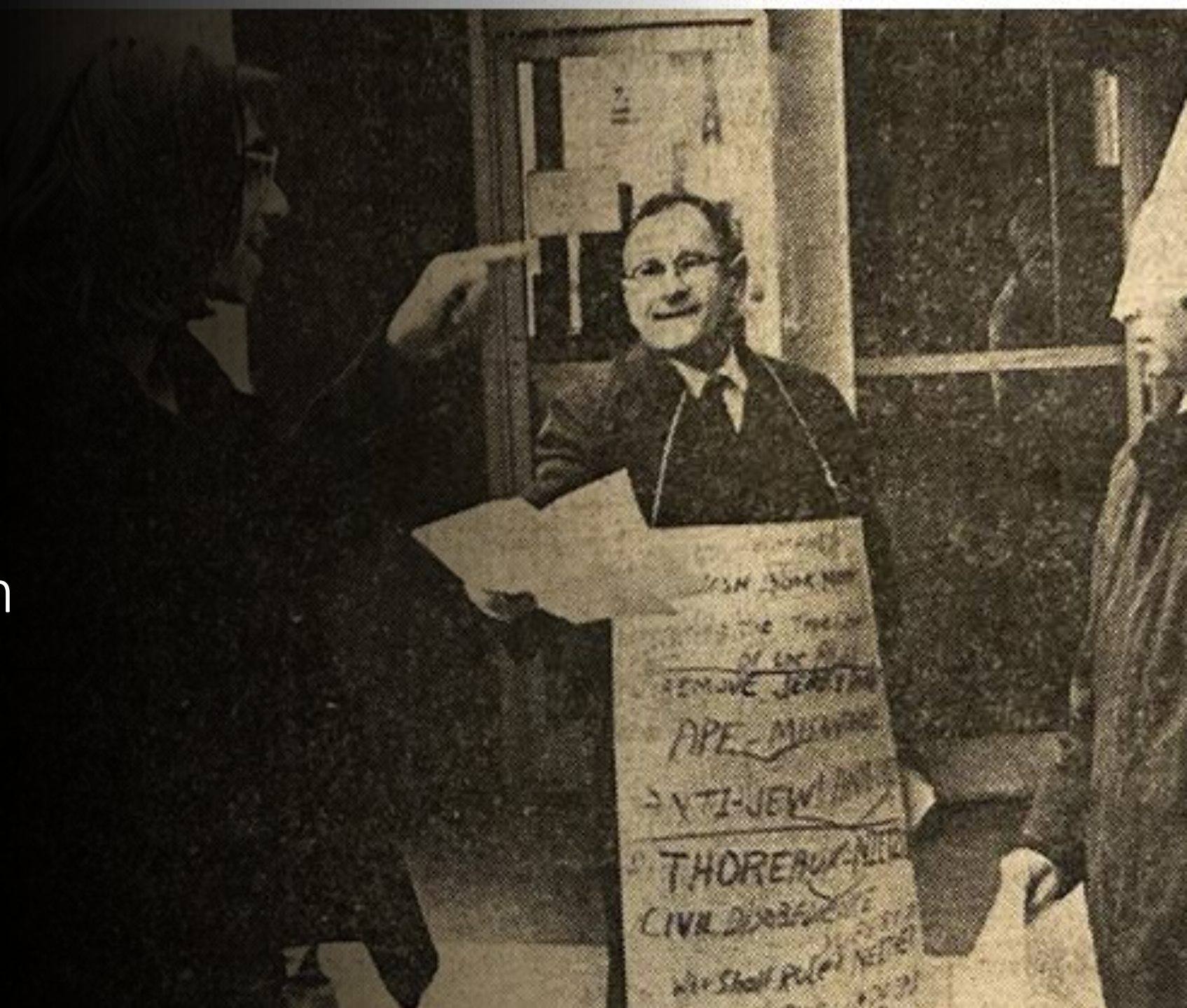
1887 Jacob Frankel, the first Jewish chaplain of the United States Military...

1954 Mayor Barney Samuel dies at age 73.

Dive Deeper Into Philly History: [Ask a Librarian for Reference Resources](#)

[View Full Timeline](#)

© 2006 The Authors
Journal compilation © 2006 Blackwell Publishing Ltd





Hyperlocal Heritage

Celebrating Philadelphia's
Neighborhood Histories

AMERICAN NATION-MAKING: Historical Narratives and Revolutionary Mythology

Curated by Delali Lyons '26

Rebecca and Rick White Gallery
Lutnick Library, Haverford College
January 16 - July 31, 2026



Haverford College



Charlotte Scott '22, curator of "Writing the Modern World: Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams, and Science and Technology in the United States," featuring the collection of Alan Klein

The answer of the President of the
United States to the Address of the Religious Society
called Quakers, from their yearly Meeting for
Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and
the Western parts of Maryland and Virginia.

Scattered,

I receive with pleasure your affectionate
address, and thank you for the friendly ex-
hortations & good wishes which you express for the suc-
cess of my Administration, and for my personal hap-
piness. —

We have reason to rejoice in the prospect
that the present National Government, which by the
favor of Divine Providence, was formed by the com-
mon counsels, and peaceably established with the
unanimous consent of the People, will prove a bless-
ing to every denomination of Men. — To render
it such, my best endeavours shall not be wanting.

Government being, among other pur-
poses, instituted to protect the Persons and Conscience
of Men from oppression, it certainly is the Duty
of Rulers, not only to abstain from it themselves,
but according to their Stations, to prevent it in
others. —

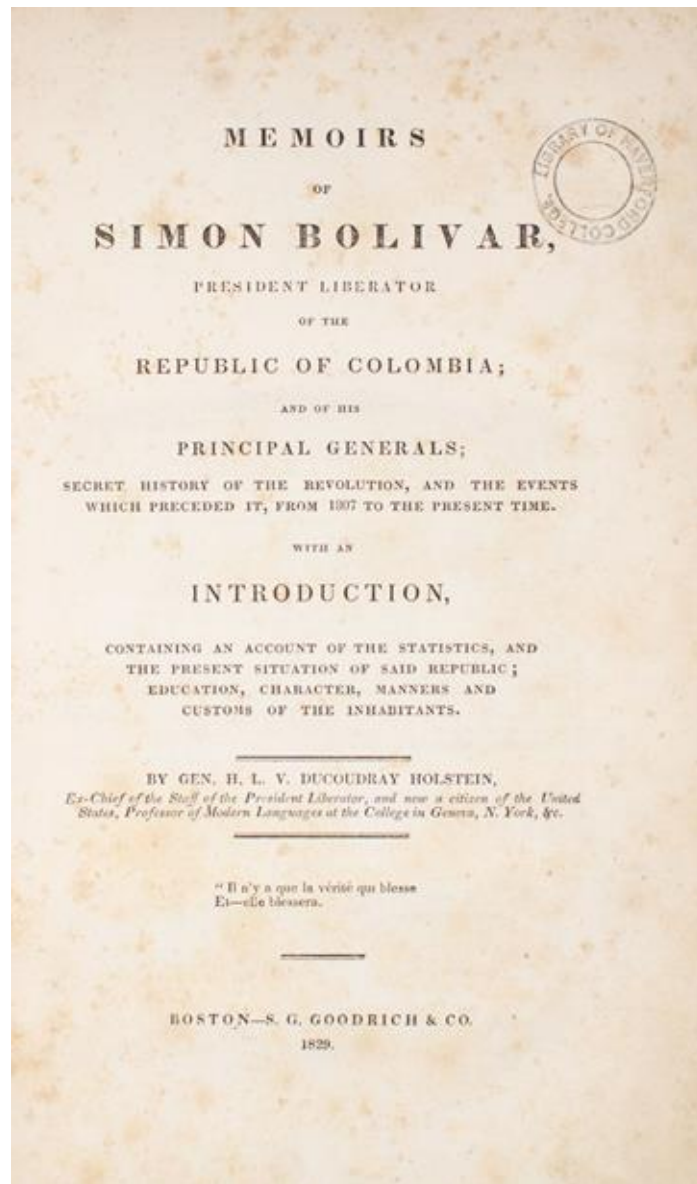
The liberty enjoyed by the People of
these States, of worshipping Almighty God ac-
cording to their Conscience, is not only among the
choicest of their Blessings, but also of their Rights.
While men perform their social Duties faithfully,
they

AN

O D E.

LET hireling bards in fulsome lays,
Hail ÆRAS o'er which Virtue sighs,
And give their noisy, heartless praise,
To deeds and days the Good despise.
Amid the din
Of blood and sin,
Of nonsense, slavery, and pride,
A glorious ray to cheer behold,
Athwart the gloom of error's maze:
DOMINGO'S Sons, the bliss so long denied,
Exult in Liberty's bright blaze,
Spite of the power of tyranny and gold.
Then hail the Day, when BLACK-MEN shout "we're free!"
Echo the tidings glad to every land and sea.

George Washington, "Answer of the President of the United States to the Address of the Religious Society called Quakers" and Thomas Clio Rickman, *An Ode in Celebration of the Emancipation of the Blacks of Saint Domingo*



Henri La Fayette Villaume Ducoudray-Holstein, *Memoirs of Simón Bolívar: President Liberator of the Republic of Colombia* and Alexander Gardner, “What Do I Want, John Henry?”

For More Information

<https://www.haverford.edu/libraries/exhibits/current-exhibits>

Opening reception February 11, 4:30

Gallery open M-F, 9-5

shorowitz@haverford.edu